

Urban Visions for the Waterfront, Gloucester COMMENTS from Table A – Charrette

Saturday March 7 2009

Overall: Our table reached consensus on putting forth the ideas below, we only around to discussion of specific parcels briefly relative to design aspects at the end of the discussion. The majority of the time was spent on what was in the draft harbor plan.

General: The group agreed that the DPA with the 50% commercial use was supportable with the recognition that protecting the DPA was important. They agreed that the harbor should be maintained and upgraded to remain and strengthen its use as a service port for the region.

HARBOR PLAN IN GENERAL

1) Strike the Language in the Executive Summary, and chapter 5 (6?) as pertains to Mitigation fund establishment (75/25% rule). All agreed that it goes beyond the extant chapter 91 fund and would serve to undermine the viability of the commercial port.

2) Create a new citizen body to facilitate, promote, encourage, and broker compatible developments and job growth in the harbor. This would be a non-regulatory body that would match the uses of fishing (including boat owners), landowners, and the greater community. The group developed a list of compatible uses that might include:

- academic uses – broadly described
- marine research facilities (academic, scientific)
- boat repair, maintenance and storage (for all types of boats – for recreational boats this would *not* include dockage)
- boat-building
- renewable energy, specifically those types of industries that would benefit the local community energy needs
- professional maritime trades
- develop infrastructure for bringing more fishing to the community, alternative fisheries opportunities, additional commercial dockage, etc.
- community supported agriculture (CSA) should include fish, and seek to expand outlets to the community for fish

– include uses including those from above that would encourage youth in the city to become involved in the harbor and waterfront activities, and facilities and uses that would support the community and neighborhoods of Gloucester as they relate to the water

3) Harbor Plan needs to establish accurate accounting of our existing fisheries dockage. It needs to clarify and state the range of vessels to include, lobstermen (80?) gillnetters, long liners, slime eel boats, herring boats, shrimp, sea clam, scallopers, ground fish draggers large and small. Some discussion included Sarah Robinson's research on haddock fishing current expansion of stock, the movement of vessels as the fish stock changes and the general shifting that occurs – the fishermen go where the fish is. She felt the stock changes in haddock will be favorable to Gloucester. This would then lead to a needs assessment of what commercial dockage might need to expand to support these. Others noted the need to include the Portland ME and NH vessels we have recently inherited. Both sizes and amounts are important, and the present Harbor Plan appears to undersize the present # and does not include all quantities and types of boats presently in the harbor. If we are to trade off Fisheries for other commercial uses we need to know what % of the Harbor needs to be maintained for Fish related activities.

4) Request a legislative action to propose a new bill for pier rebuilding based on Title V or another mechanism which would allow an owner to rebuild piers and pay over an extended # of years, or pay when the property is sold. Ernie Morin noted that a recent bill proposed in Lynn might be good to review.

7) Recommend that an overall harbor 21E assessment be done to see if sites can be combined into a larger overall Brownfield clean up program.

8) Look into the possibility of establishing a fisheries dockage bank similar to the Permit bank that would set aside more dockage in perpetuity for any category of the fisheries.

HARBOR COVE AREA PROPERTIES

General: The group agreed that preserving access from the water as well as the land is critical in the expansion, and agreed that water access would be to increase dingy tie-ups. In most ways the water access is better than land access and this is an issue.

1) Harbor Loop. The Harbormaster noted that Solomon Jacobs pier is slated for expansion/reconstruction and would (and does) include dingy tie ups. Although this pier has trash receptacles, it was felt that the harbor could seek to make Gloucester an inviting transient destination to include showers (they now go to the YMCA if they know it exists), and public restrooms, easily hosed out. (It appears this cannot be built at this site, but would be useful if it could be somewhere along this side of the harbor to connect to downtown area, from an economic development standpoint and a reinforcement of the downtown area businesses.)

2) Preserve the View corridors (from adjacent streets to water) in general and of the undeveloped parcel I4C2 when developed so that the water is visible from Rogers Street. Ernie noted that a precedent might be seen in the way Chatham MA has allowed public access. As we discussed how to walk around the harbor, and the difficulty of this – it was thought that the I4C2 property development could include a section of public upper storey to provide a great public viewing of the harbor. Some voices noted that any means of making the harbor more connected to walk around would be a great asset. Many long-term residents noted that historically the waterfront was much more porous and as kids they easily accessed the water and could view the harbor workings. The goal is to extend access as possible for residents as well as visitors.

3) The harbormaster noted that of the properties within Harbor Cove, many have piers that can still be extended per legislation enacted a few years ago. Also that 50 transient moorings controlled by his office exist on the harbor that can be used for recreational boats.